the minds and affections of His subjects and His demise has come as a correspondingly heavy loss to all the inhabitants of this State.

The Leader of the House will move a Condolence Resolution and it will be seconded by the Deputy President. The House will then adjourn for the day as a mark of respect to His Highness' memory.

Condolence Resolution.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar:—

Mr. President,

Sir,

I rise to perform the solemn duty of moving the following resolution:—

"This Council desires to express, with due respect, its deep sorrow at the irreparable loss sustained by the State by the lamented demise of His Highness Sir Sree Rama Varmah G. C. I. E., the late Maharaja of Cochin, and its sincere sympathy with His Highness the Maharaja, and other Members of the Ruling Family and His late Highness' Consort and children, in their sad bereavement".

This Council is the creation of His late Highness, his sole creation—a monument of His Highness' Rule—a priceless gift to us. Who, among us, who had the privilege of being present at the inauguration ceremony of this Council seven years ago, will forget the benevolent face and sweet personality of His Highness who greeted us with a message of faith, hope and good-will and wished us god-speed in the discharge of the duties that we then entered upon? I can speak with personal knowledge, and I hope it is the experience of several others among us here, that this Council had ever a very warm corner in His Highness' heart and that he always made it a point to ask every Member who visited him as to how the Council is working and whether it has fulfilled the noble object with which he instituted it. I remember vividly the questions that His Highness used to ask me every time I paid my respects to His Highness: "എന്താ പേഷ്ക്കാര, കൌൺസിൽ നന്നാ, അതുകൊണ്ട് ഉണ്ടുണ്ടാ"? ("What Peishkar, is this Council good; is it useful" and the like?) And nothing gave him more pleasure than answers in the

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affirmative. It is but appropriate that this Council should pay its respectful homage to the memory of the late Sovereign, by passing this resolution.

Our State, though small, is big in having a Ruling Family which has given her a series of distinguished Rulers who have established a tradition for constitutional methods of reigning and a spirit of self-sacrifice and service to the public. None will deny that our late Ruler was an ornament in the series. His Highness, before he became Ruler, had left a record of solid work done to the benefit of the public, firstly as a senior member of the Ruling Family and subsequently as Elaya Raja for a period of a decade and a half. His Highness had his early education in Sanskrit according to the traditional methods of his family, and like other members of his generation, he was also given a course of study in the English language and literature. His Highness specialised himself in the study of the Ayurvedic system of medicine, especially that important branch of it relating to the cure of reptile poisons. The charitable service that he rendered to those who were the unfortunate victims of snake-bites is a matter of common knowledge throughout the length and breadth of the State. Very frugal and simple in his habits of life, he rose to the position of a self-made prominent landholder by careful spending and investment of his income. As a landholder His Highness made himself thoroughly acquainted with the principles and procedure of survey and settlement operations that were then in progress. His Highness had also occasion to devote his attention to the study of political economy, science of wealth and other allied subjects, and he also succeeded in acquiring a general knowledge of the laws of the country especially those relating to property. Landholders of that period who had difficulties to solve freely sought the advice of His Highness and got proper solution. His intimate knowledge of survey and settlement operations to which I am in a position to bear personal testimony, benefited the public a great deal in that the objection petitions in settlement matters presented by the agents of His Highness were so cogent and reasonable that the relief prayed for on behalf of the Elaya Raja's palace had *per force* to be extended to other lands similarly situated; for example, the re-grouping of tracts for cocoanut gardens in the sandy ridges of our littoral regions in the old Cochin Taluk was entirely due to the suggestion made on behalf of His Highness. His knowledge of law relating to property was also very helpful not only to the public but also to the State. On one occasion, I distinctly remember, when the draft prospectus containing

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the terms of the State Debenture loan floated for financing the Railway more than 30 years ago, was referred to His Highness by the then Diwan (the late Sir P. Rajagopalachariar) for advice, His Highness pointed out that unless the bonds issued were exempted by a special Proclamation from registration, they would be illegal as the Registration law then stood. The result was the urgent issue of a Proclamation exempting the Railway Debenture Bonds from Registration. His Highness' instinct for economy and efficient management of finances resulted in the improvement of the administration of Her Highness the Valia Amma Raja's Estate, which task was entrusted to him by the then Ruler, His Highness the late lamented retired Maharaja Sir Sree Rama Varmah, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E. It is no exaggeration therefore to say that when that great Ruler chose to retire into private life and entrusted his beloved cousin with the sacred duty of ruling this land, the subjects of the State felt very happy. They gave expression to their feeling in the following term in an address of congratulation that they presented to him on the auspicious occasion of His Highness' Installation:—

"The country has reasons not only to congratulate Your Highness, but has also grounds to wish itself joy on this auspicious occasion. For, no Prince has come to this high position with a better equipment than is Your Highness to-day to discharge adequately the difficult and at times delicate duties that appertain this exalted office. To Your Highness' inborn intelligence, trained and chastened by culture and an experience of a wide and varied character, Your Highness' knowledge of the political and economic problems of the day and the ability to apply it successfully to local conditions, Your Highness' devotion to duty and keen desire further to develop the resources of the country and increase the welfare of its people, and above all, Your Highness' simple amiable and accessable ways—to these—we Your Highness' subjects, are no strangers".

Need I say that our late Ruler was especially fortunate and favoured of Gods throughout his life? Long before the time when that august position would come naturally to him in the ordinary course of things, he had the rare fortune to assume the Rulership of the State—a State whose administration was then a model for all other Indian States—a State with a full and flowing treasury, a land revenue settlement which resulted in an even and judicious distribution of the State demand, a line of Railway connecting one end of the State with another, a beautiful capital with a supply of good and wholesome water, a well-organised and efficient administrative machinery under a statesman-like Diwan of great capacity and loyalty to the State (I refer to then Mr. (now Sir) Joseph Bhore), a happy and contented people, and above all, with the late Ruler himself in full vigour

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and best of health watching over the whole as a guardian angel. These fortunate and unique circumstances cannot be described better than in the following passages occurring in the public address already alluded to:—

"The circumstances under which Your Highness' rule has begun also augur well for Your Highness and for the country. Your Highness well knows that almost invariably a Ruler succeeds to the throne of his ancestors on the demise of his predecessor and congratulations on occasions like this are always tinged by an element of sadness. But in the present instance, Your Highness' illustrious predecessor after a strenuous rule of well-nigh 20 years for the lasting good of his land, is happily still with us. And we humbly trust that the present prosperous condition of the State will enable Your Highness to complete the works of public utility already commenced, and to start and work out fresh schemes of beneficent reforms under very favourable conditions and with the confidence and good will ever vouchsafed to this State by the Paramount Power."

Is not this a heritage for any man to be proud of and be grateful to Providence for giving it? The answer to this is contained in His Highness' own words in the reply to the public address referred to above:—

"I have for many years watched with deepest interest the growth of the State and the steady advancement of its people. I have seen it rise year by year, in material prosperity, in intellectual vigour and social well-being under the fostering care of my illustrious predecessor; and now that the heavy burden of guiding its destinies has fallen upon me, I realise to the full the solemn trust that is committed to my charge. It is no easy matter for me to take up the great work at the stage at which my revered cousin has laid it down".

His Highness kept the above ideals always in view and the prosperity of the State has been remarkably progressive in all directions. Education advanced by rapid strides from year to year. There was phenomenal development in local self-government. There is no village now that is not served by a Panchayat. The towns are served by well conducted Municipal Institutions. The development in the extension of medical relief and sanitation, improvement of agriculture, co-operative movement, protection of depressed classes, industries and other allied matters received the attention of His Highness' administration and the results achieved in this direction have been substantial. Sympathy to the poor, as a whole, and especially to the agriculturists was the key-note of His Highness' policy in guiding the administration. The rate of interest on agricultural loans was reduced to three per cent per annum. The rates of pensions of subordinates of the lowest rungs of the ladder were

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considerably enhanced. Following the lead of his illustrious predecessor who gave Ernakulam a good supply of water as a free gift, particular attention was paid by His Highness to the supply of water in places like Mattancheri, Nemmara, Aylore and Trichur. Development of communications continued to receive intensive attention. It is impossible on an occasion like this to recount the manifold directions in which our little State has progressed during His Highness' benevolent rule of over 17 years. I have only stated the most prominent among them.

His Highness' work won the appreciation of the Paramount Power very early in his reign, and he was made G. C. I. E. in the third year of his reign. The loyal and magnificent manner in which the State co-operated with the Paramount Power during the troublesome times of the Great War resulted in the title of the Ruler being raised hereditarily to Maharaja. His Highness made extensive tours in Northern India and in the early years of the reign His Highness took part in the deliberations of the Chamber of Princes on two occasions. The personal interest that His Highness took in the details of administration in the early stages cannot be expressed more than in the words of the Diwan Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharyar.

"Convention prescribes that the personality of the Ruler should be kept in the background in official records. But I feel that I cannot close this report withoutan expression of my gratitude to His Highness the Maharaja whose genuine desire for progress and sound judgment have been of assistance to me to a degree which the outer world will never know."

Alas! there is no unalloyed material happiness in this world. Unfortunately His Highness' health began to fail. As observed by His Excellency the present Viceroy in opening the last session of the Chamber of Princes, illness was His Highness' portion in recent times. But he heroically struggled against it and continued to discharge the duties entrusted to him up to the last moment. His Highness, as we all know, went to Madras in December last for a course of treatment and while his loyal subjects were anxiously hoping for his return with renewed health and vigour, the inexorable hands of death snatched him away from our midst. He lived a rich and noble life, a life full of service to his country and a life full of years and honours.

MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.

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Dr. A. G. Menon.—Sir, the painful duty to second the very important resolution before the House to-day has come to me once again. It is within the recollection of the House that it was only the other day that we met under similar auspices to consider a similar resolution bemoaning the demise of His Highness Sir Sri Rama Varmah, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E., the abdicated Maharaja of Cochin. If the abdicated Maharaja is the "Father of Modern Cochin," as His Highness is rightly called by "*the*" historian, I feel no hesitation whatever to say that the late lamented Maharaja Sir Sri Rama Varmah G. C. I. E is the "Foster father of Progressive Cochin". The shock caused by the demise of the two Maharajas in quick succession is beyond endurance for Cochin. Verily, Cochin would not have survived the shock had she not found solace in the pure heart of our present Ruler, a Maharaja who is second to none in the regard for the welfare and prosperity of His Highness' subjects.

The late Maharaja Sir Sri Rama Varmah G. C. I. E., was, as Lenin was to Soviet Russia, "a true representative of progress in the political history" so far as Cochin was concerned. This Legislative Council is the standing monument of His Highness' deep anxiety to associate His Highness' subjects, with Himself, in an ever-increasing measure, in the administration of the State. Sir, let me ask this House a plain blunt question. Had it not been for our late Maharaja, had it not been for His Highness' progressive views in matters political, had it not been for His Highness' ardent desire to grant us our political aspirations, do you for a moment imagine that this, our Legislative Council, would have seen the light of day? Had it not been for our late Maharaja, do you think that we would have met in this august Assembly to bring home to the mind of the Government the many needs of the people? Had it not been for our late Maharaja, do you think that we would have got the right to elect our Deputy President—a right unheard of in any other Native State in India? In my view the question admits of only one answer. I make bold to say that none of us would have been here if His Highness had not, consistent with the needs of the times and principles of constitutional Government, vouchsafed to us seven years ago this Institution, where the mind of the people is focussed on the administrative machinery of the State. Again, the constitutional Ruler as His Highness was, it was His Highness' regard for democratic institutions, that has been responsible for the re-organisation of

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the Municipalities and the efficient expansion of Village Panchayats—all truely democratic institutions eminently suited to train citizens in the esteemed art of self-government. Is further proof necessary to establish that His Highness was a "true representative of progress in the political history of Cochin"?

The late Maharaja was a great 'Vedantist' of the type of Sri Sankara, who by his precept and conduct obliterated all distinctions between man and man. His Highness out of an overflowing feeling of love towards humanity could not but revet His Highness' attention on the depressed and backward classes of Cochin. Economically poor, socially down-trodden, politically neglected, the lot of these children in the family was anything but satisfactory and His Highness thought, and justly too, that these specimens of humanity, on the border of animal kingdom, deserved succour at His Highness' hands. The result has been the reorganisation of a separate department to take care of them, the establishment of a number of colonies and homes intended solely for their uplift, the founding of night schools for the education of their adults, the throwing open of all public schools to their children, and the granting of the use of almost all public roads to all, and the innumerable other facilities for their advancement—moral, social, economic and political. The nomination of a member of the depressed class to the Legislative Council was perhaps the first public act recognising the political rights of the once down-trodden folk. These communities will ever remember His Highness as their benevolent Ruler and the Hon'ble Members of this House, I am sure, will perfectly agree with me when I say that His Highness has with the true insight of a statesman made them feel that they are also valued members of the State and by His Highness' opportune interference in their affairs and the timely recognition of the just rights of the oppressed ones has averted all possibilities of a patrician-plebian fight in Cochin.

The late Maharaja in the matter of recognising the rights of women was second to no other Ruling Prince in India, and did everything for their advancement. Every facility has been offered for their education and all their legitimate aspirations have been complied with, even unasked. His Highness took a keen interest in the education of the female members of even the Royal Family; as a result of this during His Highness' reign one of the Princesses had graduated. The deliberate omission of sex disqualification in the Cochin Municipal and Legislative Council Regulations and the nomination of ladies to these Councils bear ample testimony to His Highness' keen interest in the advancement of women. It may

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be re-called with pride that His Highness' Government was the foremost in India to nominate a Lady as a Member of the Legislative Council and the first to nominate a Nambudiri Antharjanam (lady) as an expert Member of the Legislative Council for Nambudiri Bills.

The late Maharaja was a social reformer. His Highness rightly understood the spirit of the times and knew how to control the current, and allowed one of his nephews to cross the 'Kala Pani' to prosecute his higher studies in England.

That the late Maharaja was an expert in state-craft, is proved by the appointment of the Special Finance Committee and the valuable orders passed on its report by the Government. The strenuous efforts made to better the conditions of the low-paid servants of the State has proved to be a source of considerable relief to many a starving family besides securing for the Government a set of able and efficient servants.

The historic announcement made on the occasion of His Highness' 70th Birthday which included *inter alia* the abolition of the differentiation between superior and inferior servants in the matter of granting pensions, the fixing of the minimum pay of the full-timed servants at Rs. 10, the large loans for the improvement of agriculture at low rate of interest, the final abolition of the monopoly of the Government in certain classes of trees, etc., etc., and the extension of Alwaye water supply to Mattancheri, are boons of a far-reaching character which posterity will cherish for all times.

His Highness was a shrewd financier too. The annual income of the State has been more than doubled during His Highness' reign. It may, however, be remembered that no new or enhanced taxation was resorted to although newer and fresh fields for taxation have been opened. To-day Cochin can safely depend on her well-fitted resources of revenue for the many productive schemes she has embarked upon—to mention only the most important among them, the Harbour works, the conversion of the metre-gauge Railway line into broad gauge and the Hydro-Electric Scheme, etc., etc.

In the annals of Cochin, His Highness' reign was a period of prosperity to the people and an era of all-round advance to the State. Now what was the secret of His Highness' success? To me it appears that His Highness' personal qualities are, in no small measure, responsible for this remarkable achievement,

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By His Highness' lamented demise the British Government has lost a faithful ally, the Royal House a benevolent Karanavan and Cochin a progressive administrator.

May His Highness' memory be cherished for ever! May His soul rest in peace!!

The resolution was carried unanimously, the whole House standing.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Sir, may I, with your permission, request you to place a copy of the resolution before His Highness the present Maharaja and forward a copy of this to the late Highness' Consort, and to publish the day's proceedings.

President.—Yes.

The House was adjourned for the day.

C. J. MATHEW,
Secretary to the Council.

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